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Contact: Drew Nannis (202) 225-5065

STARK CALLS FOR GAO INVESTIGATION INTO IMPROPER, ILLEGAL MILITARY RECRUITING

WASHINGTON, DC – Yesterday, US Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA, 13th) offered an amendment to the 2006 Defense Authorization bill requiring the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to report to Congress several aspects of illegal and improper military recruiting tactics. The amendment passed, as did the bill. Senate action is expected in the next few weeks.

With the reality of the Iraq war discouraging young Americans from joining the military, U.S. Army recruiters have resorted to appalling tactics in an attempt to boost their numbers of new recruits. Recruiters have recently been caught showing teenagers how to create a fake high school diploma and telling them what products to buy to pass a drug test.

“Because the Iraq war is suppressing military enlistment, military recruiters are now using illegal and improper tactics to enlist soldiers,” Stark said. “This study will reveal how widespread the problem is and how high up the chain of command the pressure to break the law is coming from. We must not allow the military to continue its track record of shielding its highest officials from responsibility.”

Stark voted against the Defense Authorization because it authorized irrational spending for defense weapons programs, pie-in-the-sky Star Wars missile defense, and did nothing to get our troops out of Iraq. To read Stark’s statement on the Defense Authorization Bill, click here: http://www.house.gov/stark/news/109th/floorstatements/05-25_defense.htm

“It is time we had a defense budget that lives within its means, accounts for what is truly required in Iraq and provides the best possible support for all our troops,” Stark added.

Should the Stark Amendment remain a part of the bill and it becomes law, the GAO has one year from the day President Bush signs the 2006 Defense Authorization bill to present their report to Congress.